GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1045
ANSWERED ON:22.07.2016
Press Council of India
Chavan Shri Harishchandra Deoram;Yadav Shri Laxmi Narayan

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Press Council of India (PCI) has not been able to protect the interest of the readers;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) the number and details of major judgments given by the PCI during the last three years;

(d) whether the judgements of the said Council not observed during the said period, if so, the details thereof along with the name of the media houses which have not observed the said judgments; and

(e) the corrective steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING [COL RAJYAVARDHAN RATHORE (Retd.)]

(a) & (b): Press Council of India, a statutory autonomous body has been set up under the Press Council Act, 1978 with twin objectives to preserve the freedom of the Press and to maintain and improve the standards of newspapers and news agencies in India. Accordingly, in order to inculcate principles of self-regulation amongst the press, the Council under section 13(2)(b) of the Act, has formed 'Norms of Journalistic Conduct' for adherence by the media. The complaints of content in print media which are in violation of the ethical norms of journalism, public taste or professional conduct are adjudicated by the Council in exercise of its powers provided under section 14 of the Act. As per section 14 of the Act, the Council, after holding an inquiry, may warn, admonish or censure the newspaper, the news agency, the editor or the journalist or disapprove the conduct of the editor or the journalist as the case may be.

The Press Council is not merely an adjudicatory body, but also a conscience keeper. The Council does not merely decide the complaints brought before it, it builds up under Section 13(2) of the Act, principles/ norms that could guide the journalists along the right path. The statistics of the complaint dealt with by the Council and the inflow of the references from the authorities are ample proof of the faith reposed in the Council by the citizens as well as the authorities of the country.

(c): A list of major decisions given by Press Council of India during the last three years is placed at Annexure.

(d) & (e): In large number of cases, the newspapers have been following the judgements of the Press Council of India. However, there is no provision in the Press Council Act, 1978 for taking any action against the newspapers in case of non-compliance of the directions by the Press Council of India.

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